DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 287 023 CE 048 465

TITLE Adult Literacy. A Policy Statement and Resource Guide for Cities.
INSTITUTION United States Conference of Mayors, Washington, D. C.
PUB DATE Jun 86
NOTE 26p.
PUB TYPE Viewpoints (120) -- Guides - Non-Classroom Use (055)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Adult Basic Education; *Adult Literacy; *Coordination; Delivery Systems; *Educational Policy; Financial Support; Illiteracy; *Literacy Education; *Municipalities; Program Design; Program Development; Publicity; Public Policy; Research Needs; Resource Materials; *Urban Programs

ABSTRACT

This report expands upon a policy resolution passed unanimously at the 53rd Annual Conference of Mayors in 1985. The first part of the report, a policy statement, points out the magnitude of the adult illiteracy problem and of some of the issues involved, and briefly indicates how various segments of society can contribute to a solution. The second part suggests guidelines for developing literacy initiatives in cities. It is designed to serve as a resource guide and is nonprescriptive. Topics covered include mayoral role, public awareness, coordination of citywide efforts, service delivery, literacy program components, resources, national organizations, and research organizations. Suggestions and examples are provided as necessary. (YLB)

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ADULT LITERACY

A POLICY STATEMENT AND RESOURCE GUIDE FOR CITIES JUNE, 1986

United States
Conference of Mayors

1620 Eye Street, Northwest
Washington, D.C. 20006

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UNITED STATES
CONFERENCE OF MAYORS

Joseph P. Riley, Jr., President
Mayor of Charleston, South Carolina

W. Wilson Goode
Chairman, Mayors' Task Force on Literacy

Acknowledgement

Information for this report was compiled by committee members of the Mayors' Task Force on Literacy of the U.S. Conference of Mayors. The material was edited by Marciene S. Mattleman, Executive Director, Mayor's Commission on Literacy in Philadelphia. The writing was done by Thomas Hartmann with assistance from Mark Gaige and Jacqueline Landau, all interns with the Mayor's Commission on Literacy in Philadelphia.

This publication was printed by the CIGNA Corporation.

June 1986

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Preface ii

Task Force Members iii

POLICY STATEMENT 1

RESOURCE GUIDE 3

- Mayoral Role 3
- Public Awareness 5
- Coordination of City-Wide Efforts 7
- Service Delivery 9
- Literacy Program Components 12
- Resources 17
- National Organizations 19
- Research Organizations 22

CONCLUSION 25

PREFACE

The Mayors' Task Force on Literacy was formed by the U.S. Conference of Mayors to address the problem of adult illiteracy. The nine Task Force members represent diverse urban areas which have recognized the dimensions of the problem and have taken steps to respond.

This report expands upon a policy resolution passed unanimously at the 53rd Annual Conference of Mayors in 1985. Part I of the report presents the magnitude of adult illiteracy and discusses the issues involved. Part II suggests guidelines for developing literacy initiatives in cities. It is designed to serve as a resource guide and is non-prescriptive.

The Task Force sees a strong need for assisting cities to devise strategies for coping with adult illiteracy. This report provides the basis for a nationwide commitment toward full literacy in urban America.

LITERACY TASK FORCE

Mayor W. **Wilson Goode**, Chairman
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Mayor Marion S. Barry, Jr.
Washington, D.C.

Mayor Raymond L. Flynn
Boston, Massachussetts

Mayor Kenneth Gibson
Newark, New Jersey

Mayor Edward I. Koch
New York City, New York
(Photo Credit: Thomas Victor)

Mayor Gus Newport
Berkeley, California

Mayor Dana G. Rinehart
Columbus, Ohio

Mayor George V. Voinovich
Cleveland, Ohio
(Photo Credit: Tibor Gasparik)

Mayor Kathy Whitmire
Houston, Texas

POLICY STATEMENT

It is estimated that 23 million Americans — 1/5 of the nation's adult population — are functionally illiterate; that is, they are unable to fill out a job application, use a telephone book, or help their children with homework. These individuals could be productive, contributing members of society; instead, because of their handicap, they are often effectively excluded from the economic and social mainstream of this country.

Consider the following:

- An infant is in critical condition in the emergency room. His teenage mother, a high school dropout, did not understand the instructions on the medicine bottle, warning of the possibility of a reaction. When the infant did not seem to improve, she increased the dosage.
- An explosion occurs in an incinerator. It is traced to a chemical container accidentally thrown into the shaft by an employee. The building custodian could not read the warning on the container, which indicated that it should have been disposed of in the laboratory by technicians.

Incidents such as these occur all too frequently in cities throughout this country. They have a common root cause — the inability of certain adults to comprehend, more than marginally, the written word.

The ramifications of adult illiteracy are manifold and uniformly negative. There is evidence that illiteracy is a contributing factor to many social problems today — unemployment, welfare dependency, alcoholism, drug abuse and domestic violence. And the problem may get worse; research shows that literacy is intergenerational in nature. Children of non-reading parents are much more likely to be non-readers themselves.

As the economy of the United States shifts from a manufacturing base to a knowledge-intensive base, the skills demanded by business and industry are often found wanting in employees; the resultant losses from diminished productivity and employee errors are staggering.

Because society is becoming more complex, the skills which were satisfactory for coping twenty-five or even ten years ago are no longer sufficient. Ensuring that all adults who want to read are, in fact, able to read, is one step this country can and must take to foster greater economic development and to improve the quality of life for all of its citizens. Toward that end, all segments of society must participate.

Local government can become involved by providing a staff to help coordinate local literacy activities, by supporting literacy legislation on the state or national levels, by encouraging literacy activities through volunteer recognition, and by establishing literacy programs for city employees. State government can help by introducing literacy legislation and by providing financial support for projects such as mandatory literacy tutoring for prison inmates who lack basic skills.

Corporations can become involved through providing in-kind or financial contributions to existing literacy efforts and through encouraging employees to volunteer. In-house, businesses can provide literacy tutoring to augment existing job-training programs and can encourage employees through incentives to find help if they have trouble reading.

Colleges and universities can become involved by encouraging students to tutor through work-study or volunteer programs, or to seek internships in literacy programs. Other ways that institutions of higher learning can participate include providing space and resources for programs, and by encouraging literacy research.

Non-profit organizations and religious institutions have special constituencies which can make them ideal sites for literacy programs.

Unions can help by providing literacy services to their members as part of job training and upgrading.

The media can help by raising awareness of literacy activities and issues, as well as by sponsoring large scale literacy programs for mass instruction.

Several cities of the U.S. Conference of Mayors Task Force on Literacy have already implemented large scale efforts to eradicate illiteracy within their jurisdictions. These cities have come to realize the social and economic costs of an "underclass" of adults lacking the basic skills necessary to compete in today's fast-paced society. In order to help other cities of the Conference organize their literacy efforts, the attached resource guide has been organized.

In this year of the celebration of the bicentennial of the Constitution, it is incumbent upon us to view literacy as access — access to the mainstream of American life. In making literacy a priority of the U.S. Conference of Mayors, we urge our cities to join forces in developing coordinated literacy efforts and in working toward legislation, both local and national, that provides help for adults lacking basic skills.

RESOURCE GUIDE

MAYORAL ROLE

Mayors face an awesome challenge. In many cities, one out of three adults is functionally illiterate. Yet in their roles, mayors are uniquely positioned to effect meaningful and lasting change on this issue. Precedents have been set in several major cities. Each program is different, reflecting the city's available resources. Taken together, however, these successful initiatives share several key components, cited below, which merit serious consideration by mayors addressing themselves to this pressing concern.

Mayors can take an active part in literacy campaigns by issuing proclamations and lending their presence to those efforts, as has Mayor W. Wilson Goode of Philadelphia.

Suggestions for a Successful Mayoral Literacy Initiative

- Publicly recognize the problem.
- Issue a proclamation including a strong statement of purpose, around which actions can be rallied.
- Form a mayor's commission or task force on literacy, or create an interjurisdictional body.
- Appoint a person on staff to work on the issue.
- Identify support, e.g. contact local corporations, community organizations, churches, and existing literacy efforts.
- Coordinate city resources, e.g. establish a phone number for information and referral and publish a directory of the city's literacy service providers.

Examples from Major Cities

- **Columbus:** The City of Columbus, as a major city employer, has joined with the Columbus Literacy Council in project POWER (Providing Opportunities in Writing, Education, and Reading), an effort to address literacy problems among city employees. It has invested in training tutors to teach employees on city time in public facilities.

- **Houston:** Mayor Kathy Whitmire has assisted the local literacy coalition, READ (Reading, Education, and Development Council) by issuing proclamations and most recently by supporting a request for additional staff at the Houston public library's Community Information Service Section which provides information and referral and other social services.

- **New York:** Mayor Ed Koch has been instrumental in forging the New York alliance of the City University (CUNY), libraries, community organizations, and the Board of Education to provide classes for adults in need of basic skills. $35 million was made available through the Adult Education Act and New York's Municipal Assistance Corporation (MAC). The Literacy Assistance Center serves as a focal point for city efforts.

Mayor Koch of New York opens a new literacy center in Brooklyn
[Photo By Al Mauro]

- **Philadelphia:** Mayor Wilson Goode has a Commission on Literacy, provides office space in City Hall, and supports staff to run it. The Commission coordinates services throughout the city, maintaining a central phone number to give information to potential students and tutors. Mayor Goode proclaims and participates in Literacy Day & Week activities during September in order to focus public awareness; he also sponsored two national conferences and his staff is rewriting city materials for lower level readers.

Columbus, Ohio Mayor Dana G. Rinehart, left, is shown presenting the certificate of completion to Elisha J. R. Anderson, the first graduate of Project POWER, the city's employee literacy program.

Mayor Kathy Whitmire of Houston presents proclamation for World Literacy Week to Doris Ellis and Lionel Robinson with the Assault on Illiteracy Project and Elinor Becker, President of Literacy Awards. Both organizations are part of the R.E.A.D. Council.

PUBLIC AWARENESS

The primary goal of a public awareness program is to inform the community at large of the magnitude of the adult literacy problem. Citizens must be made aware of the deleterious social and economic consequences of illiteracy before their support can be mobilized to help those in need. In order to alleviate illiteracy, support must come from all segments of society. Suggestions for a successful city awareness campaign are as follows:

- Develop a slogan and logo which capture the theme of literacy and use public transportation, sanitation vehicles and local newspapers to carry the message.
- Catalogue and publicize adult literacy programs.
- Publicize the literacy-related activities of community groups, e.g. tutor trainings, staff development meetings and recognition ceremonies. These events can increase the involvement of the public.
- Recognize the efforts of outstanding students and volunteer tutors. Let them speak about their experiences; as personal role models, they provide the best motivation for others.
- Conduct public hearings; arrange for tutors and students to testify, as well as prominent business and community leaders.
- Coordinate lobbying efforts at city, state and national levels.
- Produce public service announcements on TV and radio; invite the participation of local celebrities and media personalities.
- Write editorials, op-ed pieces or letters to the editor highlighting the consequences of illiteracy.
- Ensure that local officials utilize media opportunities, such as interviews, to increase public awareness about illiteracy.

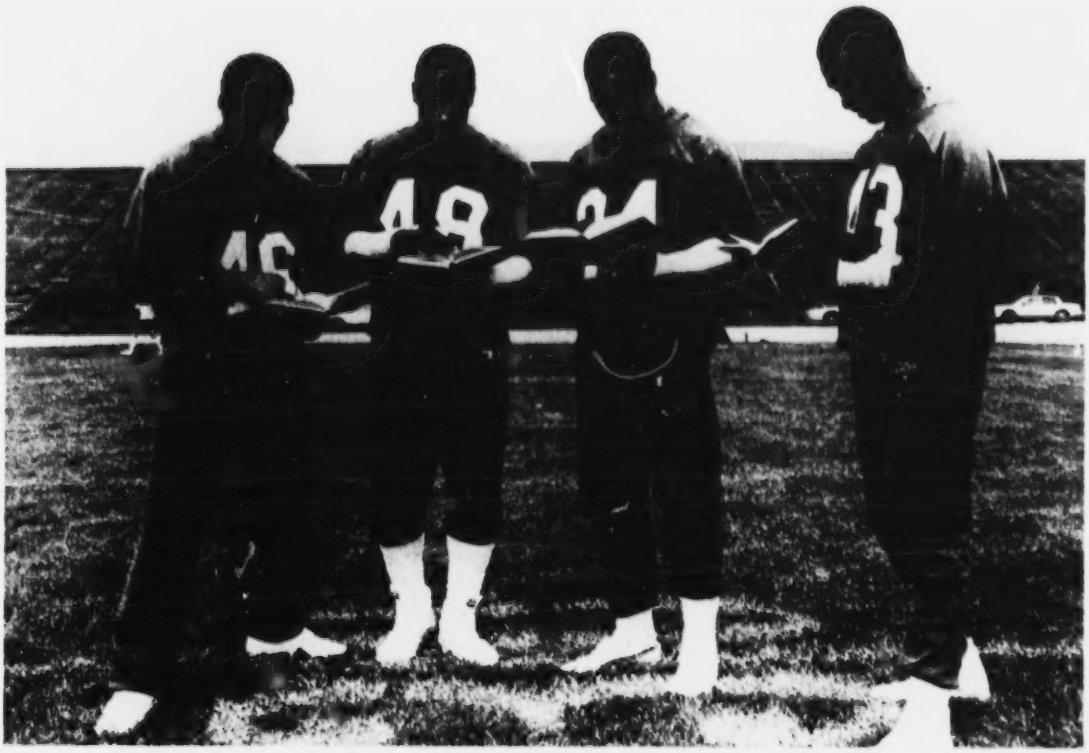
An awardee with her certificate at the March 25, 1986 Literacy Awards Ceremony in New York City.

12

Project Literacy U.S. (PLUS)

Project PLUS, a public service campaign being undertaken jointly by American Broadcasting Companies, Inc. [ABC] and the Public Broadcasting Service [PBS], is a major national media/outreach project to heighten awareness of adult illiteracy in the U.S. The goal of the project is to institute or provide support for an existing literacy coalition in every area where there is an ABC and/or PBS station. The networks intend to examine literacy in news and magazine programs and provide thematic treatment of the subject in the story lines of prime time, daytime and children's shows throughout the year. Two major documentaries are scheduled for September 1986. Mayors interested in participating should contact:

Margot Woodwell
Station Manager, WQED
4802 5th Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15213
412/622-1300



To heighten public awareness, local sports celebrities, such as the Philadelphia Eagles pictured above, could engage in "Read-a-Thons".

COORDINATION OF CITY-WIDE EFFORTS

Cities can maximize local literacy efforts through comprehensive coordination of services for adults in need of basic skills.

Suggestions for a Successful Coordination Effort

- Establish a central telephone number for information and referral.
- Support or create a coalition of service providers and a coordinating body. Maintain ongoing contact.
- Catalogue learning opportunities in the city.
- Catalogue resources available: books through the library system, tutors through voluntary programs, newspapers interested in publicizing literacy, etc.
- Create a coalition of "friends of literacy" from the public and private sectors, including corporations and funders. Schedule an annual conference and/or regular meetings.
- Establish an identity; hold a contest for a slogan and logo.
- Provide technical assistance to local centers. If such programs are not already in place, regularly schedule tutor training and staff development sessions, and give advice on starting programs.
- Create and maintain an up-to-date mailing list in order to publicize coalition events.
- Publish a newsletter on a regular basis.
- Develop citywide celebrations, e.g. Literacy Month.

Examples from Major Cities

- **Baltimore:** The Baltimore City Literacy Commission, a blue ribbon panel appointed by Mayor Schaeffer, has used well known public figures and community leaders to heighten awareness of the city's literacy program. In addition, the Commission maintains a central referral telephone number and supports training and site expansion.
- **Boston:** Federal, state and city funds have been directed at illiteracy through city agencies. A demonstration project has resulted in the creation of a network for adult literacy. The city's resource center provides coordination of efforts and works towards service development.
- **Cleveland:** The Communications Skills Study Group, a consortium of greater Cleveland businesses, educational institutions and foundations conducted a detailed study of existing literacy programs. Based on their findings, a series of recommendations and guidelines for future actions was issued.
- **Columbus:** The Mayor's Advisory Commission on Adult Literacy was established by Mayor Dana G. Rinehart to increase public awareness of adult illiteracy and to increase support for programs to address the problem. In addition, the Columbus service providers have formed a county-wide coalition called United for Adult Literacy (UAL).
- **Newark:** A group of forty corporations, non-profit institutions, community agencies, libraries, religious groups and educational organizations has conducted a large public-awareness campaign to heighten consciousness about Newark's literacy problem and encourage citizens to volunteer as tutors.
- **New York:** Through the office of Mayor Ed Koch, the Literacy Assistance Center (LAC) is funded to coordinate services and provide technical assistance. In addition, LAC serves as a clearinghouse, collects and analyzes data and advocates literacy concerns.
- **Philadelphia:** All services for adult learners are coordinated through the Mayor's Office. The Mayor's Commission on Literacy annually publishes a catalogue of programs in operation, communicates with agencies through an electronic system, collects data on all city programs and develops resources for services through private and public sector cooperation.

SERVICE DELIVERY

From the experiences of the Task Force cities, it is clear that an effective city literacy program must consist of a coalition of diverse components: libraries, churches, community-based organizations, businesses, schools, the media, unions, prisons, government, etc. Program examples with staff contacts are presented for cities to consider in starting literacy programs or to augment existing efforts.

Service Delivery Components

- **Libraries.** Since the 1920's libraries have been centers for literacy activity. Located in communities nationwide, they serve as community centers and friendly learning environments independent of schools which sometimes create anxiety in adult learners. To date, however, much of the potential of libraries remains untapped. CONTACT Literacy Center, a non-profit organization serving as a national information and referral clearinghouse in the area of functional illiteracy, reports that only 467 of the nation's 15,000 public libraries are involved actively in literacy efforts. Funding is available through the Library Services and Construction Act (LSCA), which provides support to state and local efforts. Illinois and California are examples of states which have augmented federal aid with their own funds to support literacy activities. The American Library Association coordinates a network of library literacy centers; it has published *Literacy and the Nation's Libraries* (1977) and continues to advocate development of new centers. For further information on the role libraries can play in combatting illiteracy, contact:

  Jean Coleman
  Office for Library Outreach Services
  American Library Association
  50 East Huron Street
  Chicago, IL 60611
  312/944-6780

Tutor recruitment at the Learning Center of the Brooklyn Central Public Library in New York City. (Photo by: Louis C. Liotta, New York Post)

- **Churches and Synagogues.** Countless churches nationwide are home to literacy programs. Their unique position in their communities make them ideal locations for such activities. Many run their own programs and can be assisted by referral agencies and similar services. Others already participate in literacy coalitions and provide a good base for a citywide campaign. The Lutheran Church has developed its own national literacy effort. For more information, contact:

  Marti Lane
  Lutheran Church Women of America
  Volunteer Reading Aides Program
  2900 Queen Lane
  Philadelphia, PA 19129
  215/428-2200

- **Schools.** School-based programs have historically been the largest providers of services for adults. As part of the traditional educational establishment, schools are evenly distributed in communities across the country, and often have access to educational resources not available to other programs. Contact the state board of education about existing programs, or about possible development. The state director of adult basic education is a good resource for information concerning programs supported by the Adult Basic Education Act.

A weekend class of adult learners
(photo courtesy of Lutheran Church Women)

- **Community-Based Organizations (CBO's).** CBO's often combine a variety of programs, including literacy, to help members of struggling communities overcome the multiple obstacles hindering them from becoming fully functioning, productive members of society. The Association for Community-Based Education is a clearinghouse for information on such programs. The report *Adult Literacy: Study of*

Community-Based Literacy Programs describes "community-based" education and gives examples of successful programs. For more information contact:

Chris Zachariadis
Association for Community-Based Education
1806 Vernon Street, NW
Washington, DC 20009
202/462-6333

- **The Media.** Literacy materials presented through the media can reach a much wider audience than possible through conventional means. For example, *The Philadelphia Daily News* publishes a column, "The Savvy Reader," three times weekly, which is aimed at lower-level readers. It is used throughout the city in literacy instruction sites. KCET (Los Angeles) is developing *"The American Ticket,"* a series of half-hour television literacy instructional programs. KCET welcomes participation from literacy providers. For more information on these projects, contact:

Bonnie Oliver
American Ticket
4401 Sunset Boulevard
Los Angeles, CA 90027
213/667-9497

Tom Livingston
The Philadephia Daily News
400 North Broad Street
Philadelphia, PA 19101
215/854-5925

Public television station WQED/Pittsburgh has developed the *Literacy Video Resource Guide*, a compilation of the major video materials available for literacy instruction. For further information, contact:

Margot Woodwell
PLUS National Outreach
4802 5th Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15213
412/622-1300

- **Correctional Institutions.** Due to the high correlation between crime and illiteracy, correctional institutions are coming to realize the importance of providing literacy services to inmates. Some states have implemented mandatory programs for those in need of basic skills. In Maryland, which mandates a 90-day tutoring program, the dropout rate following the initial class is only 10%, a figure which offers striking testimony to the importance that the prison population itself attaches to literacy. Cities may be able to fashion similar programs compatible with their individual needs. A comprehensive study of prison literacy programs, the Literacy Programs for Adult Offenders (LPAO) Project, is available from the National Institute of Corrections. This group may be contacted through:

Stephen Steurer
Literacy Programs for Adult Offenders Project
National Institute of Corrections, Prisons Division
320 First Street, NW
Washington, DC 20534
202/724-8300

- **Unions.** The goal of increased literacy fits in well with traditional union agendas of job training and upgrading. For example, New York's Consortium for Worker Literacy, a coalition of seven major New York unions, with support from New York's Municipal Assistance Center and the State Board of Education, provides classes in adult basic education, high school equivalency, and job-related skills to members at a variety of sites around the city. For more information on the Consortium's model, contact:

Joe McDermott
International Brotherhood of Teamsters
216 West 14th Street
New York, NY 10011
212/807-0550

LITERACY PROGRAM COMPONENTS

While cities have varied literacy needs, all of which might be addressed individually, urban adult literacy programs share several components which can serve as guidelines for cities with developing efforts: content, staff training and development, materials, methods, monitoring, evaluation, and a data base.

Program Content

Urban literacy programs usually provide one or more of the following types of instruction:

- ABE (Adult Basic Education) — instruction for those at grade levels 0-8, basic reading, writing, and sometimes math.
- GED (General Education Development) — instruction for readers from grade levels 9-12 in all areas for the high school equivalency certificate.
- ESL (English as a Second Language) — a program which provides learners language skills in English, along with beginning instruction in reading and writing.
- Occupational training — as learners move beyond the sixth grade level, job training programs should be viewed as essential corollaries to basic education. These programs are often available through the Private Industry Council and/or proprietary organizations.

Staff Training and Development

Often these services, like the central referral of tutors and students, can best be provided by a citywide coordinating body. No matter how they are provided, however, they are an essential complement to literacy classes. Important suggestions for staff training and development follow:

- Develop brochures, public service announcements, and recruitment drives to attract volunteer instructors.
- Conduct pre-service training for tutors. Typically, these sessions range from 9 to 16 hours and consist of assessment procedures, basic reading instruction, preparation of specific instructional objectives for lessons, sensitization to the problems of adult learners, and the use of varied materials for adult learners.
- Provide in-service or staff development sessions during the course of programs to inform tutors of new developments and techniques. These might then be employed by tutors in planning their own lessons. Staff development sessions are vital to maintaining the enthusiasm and creativity of tutors and teachers.

Materials

Tutors usually employ a basic set of sequential skills materials designed especially for adult readers and prepared for easy use by volunteer tutors. Other materials used in literacy programs reflect the issues and concerns relevent to adult learners: childcare, housing, employment, cooking, neighborhood self-help, etc. Many programs feature materials which are tailor-made by the instructors to fit the individual's interests and aims. Other programs featuring GED materials tend to emphasize test content and are more uniform nationally. The Free Library of Philadelphia has developed a bibliography of adult materials, the *Reader Development Bibliography*. For information, contact:

Melissa Buckingham
Free Library of Philadelphia
Logan Square
Philadelphia, PA 19103
215/686-5346

Methods

It must be remembered that many adult students have experienced failure and frustration in their past schooling. Literacy programs need to be sensitive to the potential fears and negative self concepts of adults, and to emphasize, in both assessment and evaluation, the knowledge and experience that adults have acquired already. Providing a comfortable, non-threatening environment and counseling support services in addition to instruction will help learners feel more confident and motivated to continue their study.

- **Classroom teaching.** Classes may be held as part of public school adult programs and in neighborhood centers that are staffed by professionals or volunteers. An effort is typically made to have the class reflect the learners' experience and knowledge. Neighborhood issues and local materials such as the community's newspaper are used in addition to basic materials. Discussions often center around problem-solving activities.

- **One-to-one tutoring.** Adults often prefer to learn in a one-to-one situation, rather than in a class. Volunteers are ideal for this type of instruction. Although one-to-one tutoring needs to be closely supervised and coordinated, it has proven to be a rewarding learning opportunity for many instructors and students. This method predominates because it costs the least to use.

Traditionally, one-to-one tutoring, as pictured above in Philadelphia, has been the primary component of many literacy efforts.

- **Large-scale media.** There have been some efforts to reach a wider audience through large-scale radio and television broadcasts, and through special columns for adult low-level readers in daily newspapers.

  Some examples of media projects follow:

  - Cambridge Books has produced a GED Video practice series. It focuses on improving reading, math and English grammar. A series of student workbooks is available for use along with the series.
  - A series of radio broadcasts, "ESL on the Air" has been initiated in Philadelphia to reach adults in four language areas. Emphasis is placed on the learner's communicative needs and life skills; the lessons address issues such as the family, health care, schools, etc.

- **Computer-Aid Instruction (CAI).** CAI is presently in operation in some centers nationwide. Preliminary research indicates that it is a very promising method for delivery of literacy services to adults. Researchers believe that CAI is useful in building confidence and independence on the part of the learner. It provides an efficient and effective alternative to other methods, giving learners immediate feedback, which may serve as a powerful motivator. Word-processing programs are useful for recording language-experience stories written by students, and for other instructional exercises. Computers are also being used in many literacy programs to analyze diagnostic tests and develop prescriptive instructional plans.

Monitoring of Literacy Programs

Programs need to assess the degree to which they are meeting their specified goals. Information associated with the monitoring component of literacy programs includes:

- Actual number of students served in the program compared to the original projections.
- Actual number of contact and instructional hours provided by the program as compared to the original projections.
- Attendance rate.
- Reading, math, and ESL levels for students compared with levels at program entry.
- Demographic data, e.g. race, sex, income, from which a profile of learners may be drawn.

Evaluation

In order to gauge the effectiveness of programs, some form of pupil evaluation is required. Typical methods of evaluation include:

- **Standardized tests.** Standardized tests are normative and are often administered to diagnose the student's pre and post-instructional reading level. Results of the test are given as grade equivalents e.g., 4.5, 5.0, etc.
- **Criterion-referenced tests.** These tests are used to evaluate a student's curriculum-related skills. They aim to mirror more closely than standardized tests the materials studied. Criterion-referenced tests relate directly to curriculum objectives.
- **Evaluation by instructor.** Instructors often keep "profiles" on each student in order to evaluate progress. Writing samples, for example, may be collected at several points during the course of the program and analyzed by the instructor and/or administrators. Audio tapes of a student's reading are sometimes collected and added to the student's profile. Anecdotal information on students is particularly important since adult learners' goals are non-traditional, e.g. students may enter a program in order to pass the driver's exam.

Data Base

As numbers of students served increase, a computerized data base system will soon become necessary. It might be procured from a financial contribution or in-kind contribution from the local business community. Management of this system is best provided by a citywide literacy coordinating body. A variety of such systems currently on the market have the capability to perform the following functions:

- The matching of tutors, students and sites that are "on file."
- The maintenance of demographical data on students and tutors, e.g. sex, age, race, etc.
- The monitoring of attendance and achievement data.
- Record keeping — weekly, monthly and annual compilations of clients served.
- The compilation of "success stories" — i.e. listings of especially noteworthy accomplishments, or accomplishments in the face of unusually adverse circumstances.

Factors Related to Program Success

The National Adult Literacy Project has conducted research among literacy service providers for information about promising practices. Its findings are available in a book (Lerche, R. *Effective Adult Literacy Programs.* New York: Cambridge Books Company, 1985). Some of those results are presented briefly below.

Successful programs have developed a "systems" approach to program design and implementation in which there is a balanced emphasis on: 1) clearly stated learning objectives; 2) assessment of learner needs and progress; 3) instructional processes; 4) guidance and counseling; and 5) program management and evaluation.

Specifically, successful programs have the following characteristics:

- They are clear about their overall goals and their philosophy of instruction.
- They develop measurable goals for every component of the program so they can monitor their success in meeting these goals.
- They diagnose each learner's needs and strengths in order to develop individually tailored learning plans.
- They provide frequent feedback to learners on their progress, and carefully document that progress.
- They frequently evaluate the program's effectiveness in meeting its goals, and use the information to improve the program.

The strength of successful adult literacy programs is that they produce observable results for participants and yield management information for staff, thus enabling programs to measure and document their success.

RESOURCES

One well-used calculation, $700, describes the amount required to turn a non-reader or writer into someone who demonstrates a ready command of the English Language. This figure includes salaries, utilities and building maintenance, and of course, considerations such as prevailing wages, variegated tax systems, supply and demand, cost of living and many other factors might serve to alter it. However, for community-based organizations utilizing volunteers, this figure can serve as a useful tool for projecting costs.

Providing one student with literacy skills is not overly expensive. However, organizations dedicated to this cause need assistance from all sectors of society. To this end, a guide to available financial as well as non-monetary resources follows.

Monetary

- **Federal.** Current federal allocations exclusively for literacy efforts total $100 million nationally. These funds are mandated by the Adult Education Act (P.L. 91-230). This amount is disbursed in two steps: first, each state receives a sum of $250,000 for literacy efforts; second, the remaining funds are distributed among the states, based on the percentage of adults lacking a high school diploma or its equivalent. Thus California, New York, Texas, Pennsylvania, and Illinois are the top recipients of funds after the initial distribution. Other Federal funds are allocated through the Job Training Partnership Act (8% set aside for literacy), prison programs, libraries, and the military.

- **State and Local.** Estimated total state and local outlays for literacy amount to $200 million. This figure includes both financial and in-kind (e.g. classroom space, books) provisions. Part of this total includes a 10% matching requirement by state and/or local governments which receive funds under the Adult Education Act. Many states and localities choose to appropriate more than the 10% minimum, thus accounting for the $200 million figure, which is greater than the total Federal outlay for literacy.

- **Private Sector.** While no reliable data exist on total private sector contributions to literacy efforts, the trend is clearly toward greater and accelerated business and industry involvement. The existence of support today that was not available two years ago attests to the burgeoning impact that the private sector is having on literacy endeavors. Financial contributions range from long-term national literacy commitments to small grants to community groups. Across the country, both large and small companies are supporting extant programs or, in conjunction with local literacy coalitions, initiating new programs on their premises. The Business Council for Effective Literacy (BCEL) monitors and encourages this corporate involvement.

In-Kind/Public and Private

Non-financial as well as monetary resources are required for the operation of effective literacy programs. Ideally, these will be procured via in-kind contributions from the private sector or via state or foundation grants. Among the resources required are:

- Space — a facility used exclusively for adult learning; e.g., access to a union hall, church basement or other shared site.
- Materials — books, magazines, pamphlets, or newspapers.
- Technology — hardware, such as computers, printers and modems and software for actual use by adult learners.
- Personnel — professional staff, support personnel, volunteer coordinators, etc.
- Technical assistance — a "loaned executive" from the private sector, or, if this is not required, the assurance of access to expert advice on technical matters when the need arises.
- Equipment — desks, furniture, paper and office supplies.
- Publicity — about programs, need for volunteers, etc. in business bulletins.

NATIONAL ORGANIZATION/FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

With good reason, today a wide variety of organizations are concerned with adult literacy. Each addresses a different constituency; together, they form a broad base for advocacy of literacy issues. The emphases of several key groups are outlined below. All welcome contact and support.

- **Adult Literacy Initiative (ALI).** This special office within the Department of Education works to consolidate and expand federal activities for literacy, both within and outside the Department. It publishes a widely circulated newsletter highlighting literacy efforts. With the Mayor's Commission on Literacy in Philadelphia, the ALI sponsors LITLINE, a nationwide electronic telecommunications network for literacy service providers. For more information, contact.:

  Karl Haigler, Director
  Adult Literacy Initiative
  U.S. Department of Education
  400 Maryland Avenue, SW
  Room 4012
  Washington, DC 20202
  202/732-2962

- **Business Council for Effective Literacy (BCEL).** The BCEL is a publicly supported foundation established to foster greater corporate awareness of adult functional illiteracy and to increase business involvement in and support of literacy efforts. It has published several working papers on literacy issues, has assembled a list of key contacts in each state, and sends a regular *BCEL Newsletter* highlighting current business activities. For information on BCEL, contact:

  Paul Jurmo
  1221 Avenue of the Americas
  35th Floor
  New York, NY 10020
  212/512-2415

- **Coalition for Literacy.** The Coalition has conducted a large-scale media campaign to heighten awareness about literacy. Through the national telephone center maintained by CONTACT, Inc. (800/228-8813) 30,000 telephone inquiries have been received, 73% of which have come from potential tutors and 18% from potential students. The following organizations comprise the Coalition for Literacy:

  American Association for Adult and Continuing Education
  American Association of Advertising Agencies
  American Library Association
  B. Dalton Bookseller
  CONTACT, Inc.
  International Reading Association
  Laubach Literacy International
  Literacy Volunteers of America, Inc.
  National Advisory Council on Adult Education
  National Commission on Libraries and Information Sciences
  National Council of State Directors of Adult Education

  For information on the Coalition for Literacy, please contact:

  Jean Coleman
  Coalition for Literacy
  50 East Huron Street
  Chicago, IL 60611
  312/944-6780

- **International Reading Association (IRA).** While not solely concerned with adult illiteracy, the Association promotes research, better teacher education, and the development of reading proficiency as a lifelong habit. It annually presents the IRA Literacy Award at UNESCO headquarters in Paris for outstanding contributions to literacy, and publishes several resources on reading instruction. For further information, contact:

  The International Reading Association
  800 Barksdale Road
  Box 8139
  Newark, DE 19711
  302/731-1600

- **Laubach Literacy International.** Laubach coordinates delivery of literacy training, materials and services at hundreds of affiliate sites across the country. Currently these programs offer Adult Basic Education (ABE) and English as a Second Language (ESL) services. Laubach encourages cooperation with other organizations; many of the local programs work through churches, schools, businesses and other community institutions. Volunteers are trained using Laubach materials along with other methods which have proven effective. For more information contact:

  Karen Norton
  1320 Jamesville Avenue
  Box 131
  Syracuse, NY 13210
  315/422-9121

- **Literacy Volunteers of America, Inc.** Literacy Volunteers of America combats illiteracy through a network of local affiliates that offer training and support for community literacy programs. The national office researches and develops materials for volunteer tutor training and program management. These materials are available to the public. To learn more, contact:

  Jinx Crouch
  404 Oak Street
  Syracuse, NY 13203
  315/474-7039

- **U.S. Department of Education.** The Adult Basic Education Act (ABE) still accounts for the majority of existing literacy programs in the U.S. A listing of all state ABE councils as well as other information on adult literacy is available from:

  Paul Delker
  Department of Education
  Division of Adult Education
  400 Maryland Avenue, SW
  Washington, DC 20202
  202/472-5860

RESEARCH CONTACTS AND ORGANIZATIONS

Despite the development of the many major initiatives outlined in this report, basic research needs are still pressing. Without understanding the nature and extent of the problem, service agencies are hampered in their ability to address as effectively as possible the various dimensions of illiteracy. Several examples of research organizations are outlined below.

- **Applied Behavioral & Cognitive Sciences, Inc.** This research and development organization deals with the issue of literacy and job training. Currently it is developing a report for the Ford Foundation on military literacy projects. For more information, contact:

  Thomas G. Sticht
  Applied Behavioral & Cognitive Sciences, Inc.
  4113 Morning Star Court
  La Mesa, CA 92041
  619/224-2810

- **The Far West Laboratory.** This San Francisco-based research firm has been involved in several major literacy projects, including the National Adult Literacy Project and the upcoming National Institute of Corrections Literacy Guidelines Project. It provides training and technical assistance for program and staff development, as well as evaluation for accountability and cost-effectiveness. For further information, contact:

  Donna Bellorado
  The Far West Laboratory
  1855 Folsom Street
  San Francisco, CA 94103
  415/565-3000

- **Home and School Institute, Special Projects Office.** This non-profit organization addresses issues of parent/child literacy. It develops projects in which adults and their children both learn literacy skills, and attempts to involve parents in the educational progress of their children. For further information, contact:

  Lili Bermant
  Home School Institute, Special Projects Office
  1201 16th Street, NW
  Washington, DC 20036
  202/466-3633

- **Institute for the Study of Adult Illiteracy.** Pennsylvania State University. It conducts, among other projects, research on the use of technology (e.g., computer-based, media-based) in literacy education. For further information, contact:

  Eunice Askov
  Institute for the Study of Adult Illiteracy
  The Pennsylvania State University
  College of Education
  301 Rackley Building
  University Park, PA 16802
  814/863-3781

- **Literacy Assistance Center, Inc.** New York. It provides research and coordination services for New York's Literacy efforts. For more information, contact:

  Jacqueline Cook
  Literacy Assistance Center, Inc.
  15 Dutch Street, 4th Floor
  New York, NY 10038
  212/267-5309

- **Literacy Research Center.** University of Pennsylvania. Concerned with developing literacy policy, it promotes dialogue between literacy researchers and school-based practitioners in the field. For further information, contact:

  Daniel A. Wagner, Director
  Literacy Research Center
  Graduate School of Education
  University of Pennsylvania
  3700 Walnut Street/C1
  Philadelphia, PA 19104
  215/898-1925

- **National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education.** NCBE is a national information center on the education of limited English-proficient persons. It disseminates data regarding bilingual education, teacher training, curriculum and instruction. It also makes research studies and materials available nationally. Programs and tutors who have questions about limited English-proficiency students can call the NCBE toll-free number, 800/336-4560. For further information, contact:

  National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education
  1555 Wilson Boulevard
  Suite 605
  Rosslyn, VA 22209
  301/927-7085

- **The Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory.** This laboratory has carried out research and development of communications skills programs, including English as a Second Language (ESL) and general adult literacy. It works on projects at local, state, and national levels. Recently it completed a report for the Office of Refugee Resettlement concerning language acquisition by immigrant populations. For more information, contact:

  Stephen Reder
  Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory
  300 SW 6th Street
  Portland, OR 97204
  503/248-6800

- **Research for Better Schools, Inc.** A regional education laboratory operating under funds from the National Institute of Education, RBS conducts, among other projects, research on urban literacy in Philadelphia. Specifically, it examines citywide characteristics and illiteracy correlation, causes of illiteracy, and student recruitment. For more information, contact:

  Antonia Neubauer
  Research for Better Schools, Inc.
  444 North Third Street
  Philadelphia, PA 19123
  215/574-9300